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The Pledge of Allegiance: Is It Illegal?

Part 2: What Will the Supreme Court Do?

The Supreme Court has [ruled](#) that schoolkids cannot be required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, although teachers can be required to lead it. The Court has also ruled that students cannot hold religious meetings at graduations and that schools cannot post copies of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms.



All of these things would seem to suggest that the Supreme Court would uphold the appeals court's decision. Yet, the Supreme Court itself begins its sessions everyday with a prayer, as does Congress. Every dollar bill and coin printed have the words "In God We Trust" on them. Many favorite American songs have references to God. Can the Supreme Court say that all these things are illegal?

Technically, yes they can. The difference here is the setting. These are public schools, supported by public tax dollars, and funded in part by the federal government. Public schools are subject to federal laws, meaning the Constitution. The Supreme Court may very well instruct Congress to take the words "under God" back out of the Pledge. (Congress added them in 1954.)


Or the Court may find, as did an Ohio federal appeals court not too long ago, that a reference to God is constitutional. (That court said that the Ohio state motto, "With God, all things are possible," did not break any laws.)

It remains to be seen.

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Ten Commandments

Analysis of Supreme Court ruling on which displays are OK.
www.firstamendmentcenter.org

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